The Exhortation of Mr. ROGERS

To his Children, which he wrote a few Days before his burning; being Martyred in Queen *Mary's* days.

Being Gody Admonitions, fit for a Christian to follow.

inted for F. Coles, T. Vere, J. Wright, J. Clarke, W. Thackeray, and T. Passinger, 1681.

An Exhortation that a Father gave to his Children, which he wrote a few days before his burning.

There is no Ingenuous Nature that will not lend an ear unto wholsome Words, though they proceed from the Mouth of an Enemy; but if they be uttered of a Friend, or Kinsman, we do not onely hearken, but listen with attention: But if a Father speaks, there is no Child so ungracious as to stop his ears; yet if all this might not prevail with you (my Children) to perswade you to be attentive, yet hearken, because they are the words of your dying Father, which I perswade my self shall not be onely heard by you, but also re-

rence and remembred when I am gone; the glass of my life is now almost spent, for the last sand is running out, therefore seeing that I have not much time to spend, let me not beat the ayr, or spend my words in vain, but let them sink into your hearts, as rain into the parched earth, and so you shall not onely abandon all sterility and barrenness, but also be happily fruitful in the works of Piety.

It was said of old, and that saying holds true, That onely Vertue and piety, is the way to felicity. It is the narrow way of vertue, (in which too too few do walk) that leads to happiness. This the Romans of old did plainly shew by their two Temples of Vertue and Honour: None could get into their temple of honour, but they must pass to it through the temple of vertue: inclineating thereby, & stirring up others to be vertuous, that they may be happy. And if you my children do desire to be happy, as I know you do, (for nature hath taught us all to be so indulgent to our selves, as to wish our own welfare) follow vertue and

Piety,

piety, and your desires shall not fail, neither shall you be disappointed of your hopes, but if on the contrary, you shall walk in the broad and common road of sin and errour, you will not only deprive your selves of the blessings of this life, but also for the future purchase to your selves endless miseries.

Thus having given you a general caution for the avoiding of sin, I will particularize in some few, which I would have you especially to take heed of: the first and chief is covetousness; 'tis this that is the root of all other vices: if riches do increase among you, set not your hearts upon them: but if it shall please God to bestow a Benjamins Portion of earthly blessings upon any one of you as he shall be mindful of you, be not you unmindful of him: and as he hath not forgotten to be gracious unto you, so be not unmindful of his poor, but cast a part of that portion to those that are in want. Beware of that sordid and sottish sin of drunkenness, which deprives a man of his sence, and by which, man that is the exactest and most curious piece that ever

A fathers Exhortation to his children, which he wrote a few days before his Burning.

GIve ear my Children to my words, whom God hath dearly bought: Lay up my Laws within your heart, and print them in your thought.

For I your Father have foreseen,
the frail and filthy way,
Which flesh and blood would follow fain
even to their own decay.

For all and every living Beast,
their Crib do know full well,
But Adams heirs even from the least,
are ready to rebel.

And all the creatures of the earth,
full well do know their way,
But Adams heirs even from the least,
are apt to go astray.

For earth and ashes is our strength,
our glory and our gain,
And into ashes at the length
we shall return again.

For Flesh doth flourish like the flower,
and groweth like the grass,
And is consumed in an hour,
as hasty comes to pass.

For I, the Image of your years,
your treasure and your trust,
Am dying now before your face,
and shall consume to dust.

For as you see your Fathers flesh,
consumed into clay,
Even so you shall my children dear,
consume and waste away.

The Sun, the Moon, and eke the Stars,
that serve both day and night,
The earth, and every living thing,
shall be consumed quite.

And all the Worship that is wrought,
that hath been heard or seen,
Shall clean consume and turn to naught
as it had never been.

Therefore see that you follow me,
your Father and your Friend,
And enter into that same Land,
which never shall have end.

I leave you here a little book,
for you to look upon,
That you may see your fathers face
when he is dead and gone.

Who for the hope of heavenly things,
while he did here remain,
Gave over all his golden years,
to prison and to pain.

Where I among my iron bands,
inclosed in the dark,
A few days before my sad death,
did dedicate this work.

And in example of your youth,
to whom I wish all good,
I preach you here a perfect truth,
and seal it with my blood.

To you my heirs of earthly things,
which I do leave behind;
That you may read and understand,
and keep it in your mind.

That as you have been heirs of that
which once shall wear away,
Even so you may possess the part
which never shall decay.

In following of your Fathers steps
in truth and eke in love,
Ye may be also heirs with him,
for evermore above.

Have God alwaies before your eyes,
with all your whole intent,
Commit no sin in any wise,
keep his Commandement.

Abhor that arrant whore of Rome,
and all her blasphemies,
And drink not of her Decretals,
nor yet of her decrees.

Give honour to your mother dear,
remember well her pain.
And recompence her in her age,
the like wish love again.

Be always at her hand,
and let her not delay,
Remember well your Father all,
that should have been your stay.

Give of your portion to the poor,
as riches do arise;
And from the needy naked soul,
turn not away your eyes.

For he that doth not hear the cry,
of those that stand in need,
Shall cry himself, and not be heard,
when he would hope to speed.

If God hath given you encrease,
and blessed well your store,
Remember you are put in trust,
to minister to the poor.

Beware of soul and filthy lust,
let such things have no place;
Keep clean your vessels in the Lord,
that he may you imbrace.

Ye are the Temples of the Lord,
for ye are dearly bought,
And they that do defile the same,
shall surely come to nought.

Possess not Pride in any case,
build not thy house too high.
But always have before your eyes,
that ye be born to dye.

Defraud not him that hired is,
your labour to sustain;
But give him always out of hand,
his penny for his pain.

And as you would another man,
against you to proceed,
Do ye the same to them again,
when they do stand in need.

And part your portion to the poor,
in money and in meat,
And send the feeble fainting soul
of that which ye should eat.

That when your members do lack meat;
and cloathing to your back,
You may the better think on them
that do both live and lack.

Ask counsel alwaies of the wise,
give ear unto the end,
Refuse not thou the sweet rebukes,
of him that is thy friend.

Be alwaies thankful to the Lord,
with prayer and with praise,
Desiring him in all your works,
for to direct your ways.

And sin not like the swinish sort,
whose bodies being fed,
Consume their time upon the earth,
from belly unto bed.

Seek first, I say, the living Lord,
have him alwaies before,
And then be sure that he will bless,
your basket and your store.

And

And thus if you direct your steps
according to this book,
Then shall they say that see your face,
how like me you do look,

And when you have this pertain
upon your fingers ends,
Pondring all out in this book,
then give it to your friends.

And I beseech the Almighty God,
replenish you with grace,
That I may have you in the heavens,
and see you face to face.

And though the sword hath cut me off,
contrary to my mind,
That I could not enjoy your love,
according to my mind.

Yet I do hope that where the graines,
shall wear me like a crown,
I shall enjoy the sight of you,
in body and in soul.

And that I may enjoy your love,
and you enjoy the Land,
I do beseech the living Lord
to hold you in his hand.

Though here my body be adjudg'd,
in flaming fire to fry,
My soul I trust will straight ascend,
to live with God on high.

What though this carcass smart a while,
and this life decay,
My soul I do commend to God,
to live with him for aye.

I know I am a sinners born,
from the Original,
And that I doe deserve to dye,
by our fore-fathers fall.

But by our Saviours precious blood,
which on the Crois was spilt,
Who freely offered up his life,
to save our souls from guilt.

I hope redemption I shall have,
and all that in him trust,
When I shall see him face to face,
to live amongst the just.

Then why should I fear grisly death,
sith he for me did die,
For King and Caesar, rich and poor,
the force of death must try.

When I am chain'd unto the stake,
and fagots girt me round,
Pray to the Lord, my soul in heaven,
be with thy glory crown'd.

Come welcome death the end of fears,
I am prepar'd to dye,
These earthly flames will send my soul,
straight to the Lord on high.

Farewel my children to the world,
where you must yet remain,
The Lord of Hosts be your defence,
till we do meet again.

Farewel my true and loving wife,
my children and my friends,
I hope to God to see you all,
when all things have their ends.
And if you do abide in God,
as you have now begun,
Your course I warrant shall be short,
you have not long to run.
God grant you so to end your days,
as he shall think it best,
That I may have you in the Heavens
where I do hope to rest.

Thus

THus hath my failing and faultring tongue endeavoured to discover unto you those vertues which will lead you unto happiness, you have heard those sundry and several documents which I have given you, but it is not enough to hear them, it is not your audience only that

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I crave, it is your Obedience that I require; for as 'tis with the body of man to eat much, and not to keep it, argues a good Appetite, but bad digestion: so it is with the divine part of man, to hear only, and not to keep it, shews quick ears which is little or nothing worth without retention: therefore these my Fathers admonitions, if you my children shall observe, and duly exercise, as I hope you will; I shall be happy in giving these instructions, and you more happy in receiving them, for you shall find that the prosecuting of these forementioned virtues, and the avoiding the formerly specified vices, shall be comfortable unto you here, and procure eternal glory for you hereafter.

I will end my Legacy with my life and both life and Legacy with a blessing: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, bless you all in this life, and make you all heirs of that blessedness of the life to come, Amen.

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